



**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
Telephone: (615) 862-7970

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**1817/1819 Sweetbriar Avenue**

**October 21, 2020**

**Application:** New Construction—Infill; Show Cause

**District:** Belmont-Hillsboro Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay

**Council District:** 18

**Base Zoning:** R8

**Map and Parcel Number:** 11704005700

**Applicant:** Brian Layton

**Project Lead:** Paul Hoffman; [paul.hoffman@nashville.gov](mailto:paul.hoffman@nashville.gov)

**Description of Project:** Staff has ordered a Show Cause hearing for front yard parking pads added to the driveway of the infill.

**Recommendation Summary:** Staff finds that the driveway and front-yard parking do not meet Section II.B.1.f of the Belmont-Hillsboro Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay Design Guidelines. Staff recommends disapproval of the proposal and that the violation be corrected within sixty (60) days of the Commission's decision.

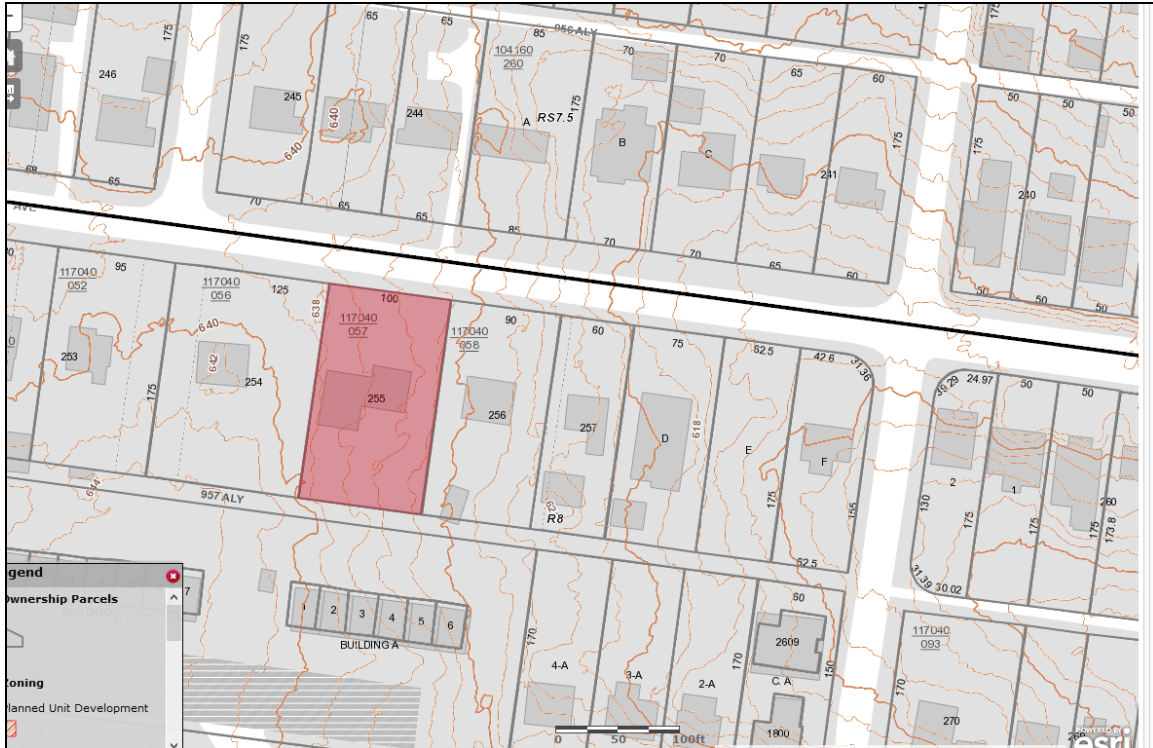
Correction could be a driveway to match the driveway approved as part of the permits or removing the parking pads, narrowing the driveway so it does not exceed twelve feet (12') in width and continuing the driveway at least to the midpoint of the house.

**Attachments**

**A:** Preservation Permit  
2018-079300

**B:** Preservation Permit  
2018-079296

## Vicinity Map:



## Aerial Map:



## Applicable Design Guidelines:

### II. B. GUIDELINES

#### f. Orientation

The orientation of a new building's front facade shall be visually consistent with surrounding historic buildings.

##### *Porches*

*New buildings should incorporate at least one front street-related porch that is accessible from the front street. Side porches or porte cocheres may also be appropriate as a secondary entrance, but the primary entrance should address the front.*

*Front porches generally should be a minimum of 6' deep, have porch racks that are 1'-3' tall and have posts that include bases and capitals.*

##### *Parking areas and Driveways*

*Generally, curb cuts should not be added.*

*Where a new driveway is appropriate it should be two concrete strips with a central grassy median.*

*Shared driveways should be a single lane, not just two driveways next to each other. Sometimes this may be accomplished with a single lane curb cut that widens to a double lane deeper into the lot.*

##### *Duplexes*

*Infill duplexes shall have one or two doors facing the street, as seen on historic duplexes. In the case of corner lots, an entrance facing the side street is possible as long as it is designed to look like a secondary entrance.*

*In the case of duplexes, vehicular access for both units should be from the alley, where an alley exists. A new shared curb cut may be added, if no alley and no driveway exists, but the driveway should be no more than 12' wide from the street to the rear of the home. Driveways should use concrete strips where they are typical of the historic context. Front yard parking or driveways which end at the front of the house are not consistent with the character of the historic neighborhoods.*

**Background:** The Commission approved the detached duplex infill at 1817 and 1819 Sweetbriar at the November 2018 MHZC meeting. Staff issued Preservation Permits 2018-079300 and 2018-079296 for 1817 and 1819 respectively. The site plan submitted for review and included in those permits showed a central shared driveway, no more than twelve-feet wide (12') wide, leading to rear garages and does not show front-yard parking pads. The site plan also included a detached accessory dwelling unit (DADU) behind each unit, but these have not yet been reviewed or permitted. (See Figure 1 and Attachments C and D.)

The concrete driveway, as built, stops at the front wall of the residences, has a parking pad flaring out in front of each unit and is approximately eighteen feet (18') wide. (See Figures 2 and 3.)

The violation was discovered on April 17, 2020. At that time, the applicant verbally agreed to correct the issue. Because staff believed that the violation would be corrected, an abatement letter was not sent until 9/4/2020, after several visits that revealed no changes to the violation.

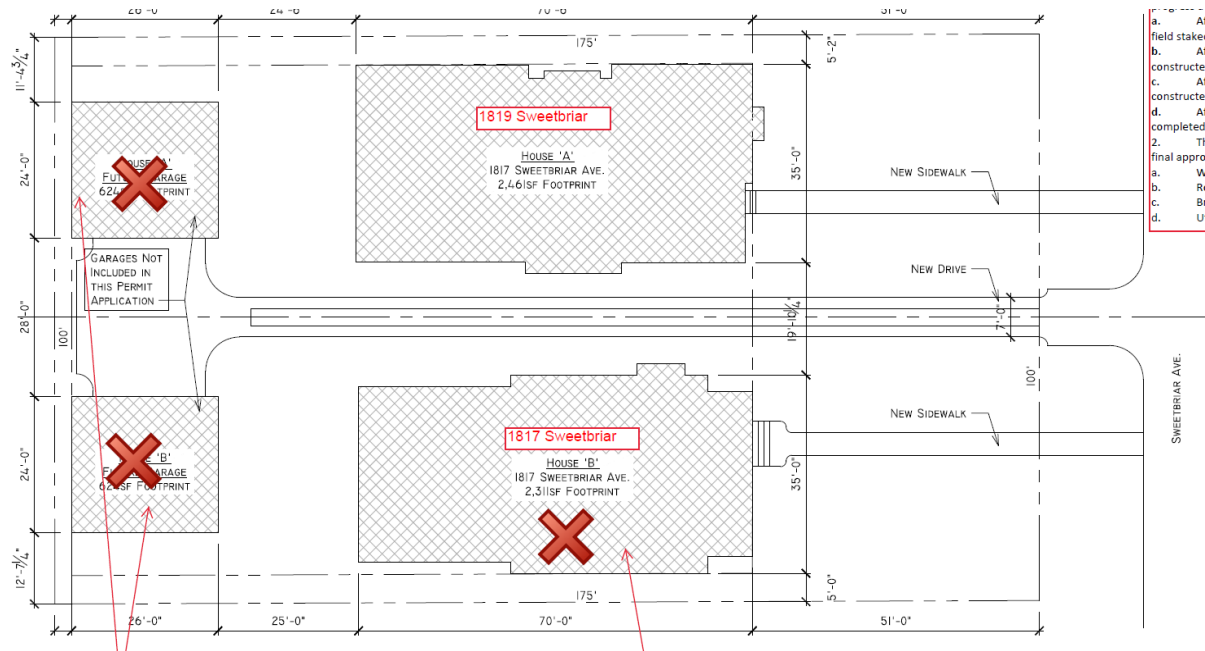


Figure 1: HCP2018-079300 and 079296.

## Analysis and Findings:

**Orientation:** The design guidelines for “orientation” require that a new building's front facade shall be visually consistent with surrounding historic buildings.” In the past, the Commission has interpreted that to mean that where a driveway was appropriate, it should continue to at least the mid-point of the house and be a single-lane (no more than twelve-feet (12’) wide. Taking the driveway to the midpoint helps to alleviate the possibility of “front-yard” parking. The italicized section of the guidelines provides this interpretation.



Figure 2. Infill and parking pad at 1817 & 1819 Sweetbriar Avenue.

Because front-yard parking is not typical of the orientation of buildings in the district, they have not been allowed in most cases. In the past, they were allowed on a street with no rear alley and a severe increase in grade from the street to the rear of the lot that would not allow for a driveway. In another instance, a single-car parking pad of turf-pavers was



allowed in front of a historic house that was so close to the rear property line that there was no room for rear parking. In addition, there was no rear alley.

In this case, there is a rear alley, the project is new construction and so is not working around existing conditions, and there is no significant change to grade. Staff does not find that there are conditions unique to this site that would warrant front-yard parking pads, an overly wide driveway, or driveways that do not go to at least the midpoint of the houses.



Figure 3. Driveway stops at the front edge of the structures.

Staff finds that the driveway width and length and the parking pads, as built, do not meet Section II.B.1.f for Orientation and is inconsistent with past decisions in like situations. Staff recommends that the front-yard parking be removed, the driveway be narrowed not to exceed twelve feet (12') in width and the driveway continued to at least the mid-point of the houses.

**Recommendation:** Staff finds that the driveway and front-yard parking do not meet Section II.B.1.f of the Belmont-Hillsboro Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay Design Guidelines. Staff recommends disapproval of the proposal and that the violation be corrected within sixty (60) days of the Commission's decision.

Correction could be a driveway to match the driveway approved as part of the permits or removing the parking pads, narrowing the driveway so it does not exceed twelve feet (12') in width and continuing the driveway at least to the midpoint of the house.